

JETHRO MARTIN, ELVIS IMPERSONATOR

Somehow you've got to make money.
What I do's impersonate Elvis,
and maybe you think that is funny
singing and swinging your pelvis

and sure it is in a way —
you get hired to perk up a party,
some gal's sixtieth birthday.
I always was kind of arty —

gold buttons, gold heads of lions,
red bellbottoms, shirt down to here,
and of course that Elvis-like hair.
I don't use a guitar.

I sing to a tape and you know
those old gals can really be sexy —
take my leg and don't want to let go.
You'd think they'd get apoplexy

but they wink right along with the show,
this one last week, anyway —
sat on my knee and oh wow! —
her hormones still working I'd say.

I keep it this side of outrageous.
Here's my card. I'm Jethro Martin.
Come to see me next month at Vegas.
My girlfriend does Dolly Parton.

WHY JOHN SANDERSON WON'T GO BACK TO WHERE HE CAME FROM OR ANYWHERE ELSE

I saw that program says San Andreas
could slip at any time, the coast might crack
and slide off in the sea, and here I sit
nineteen stories up. Why don't I pack
and drive off somewhere steadier than this?

Well, hell, you tell me where. Where I come from
it's blizzards or tornadoes — you can be
watching TV sometime and there you are
and your whole family whirled to the next county —
no life, no wife, no kids, no house, no car.

Florida or other paradises
the hurricanes'll hurl you in the drink.
There's Mount St. Helens up in Washington,
a fiery bubbling smoky lava sink —
the ones in Hawaii also aren't much fun.

Besides which, sooner or later driving'll get you —
any way you go's a Vegas gamble.
Amtrak's tracks are full of lethal twists.
You take a plane and either you crash or whammo —
get gunned down by a bunch of terrorists.

THE ODD COUPLE

They kept that place a picture
from Sunset magazine —
birds of paradise,
lawn a velvet green

and never any trouble —
we've had cops around
to parties on the block —
they didn't make a sound

except sometimes some music
classical, not rock —
then when the big one died,
the other still in shock,

here comes the family —
sells everything they can,
dishes, silver, sofas
out there on the grass

and that poor man kept crying —
"Some of this is mine."
I bought a chair myself
and gave it back to him.

Now it's more rundown,
loud voices in the air,
tan splotches on the lawn —
normal people there.

— Harold Witt

Orinda CA